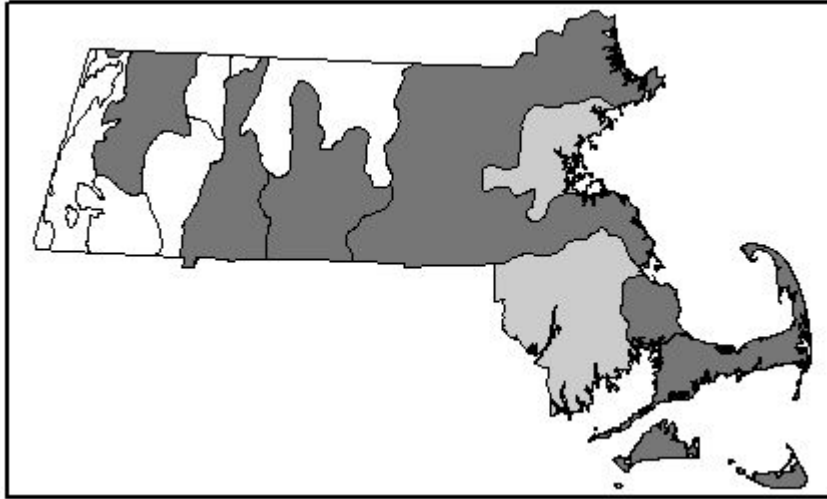


**Community Name:** OAK - HICKORY FOREST

**Community Code:** CT1B2B0000

**SRANK:** S4



**Concept:** A hardwood forest dominated by a mixture of oaks with hickories mixed in at a lower density.

**Environmental Setting:** Well drained sites, such as upper slopes, ridgetops, usually with west and south -facing aspects.

**Vegetation Description:** A broadly defined, variable, forest type. The canopy is dominated by one or several oaks (*Quercus rubra*, *Q. alba*, *Q. coccinea*, and *Q. velutina*). Mixed in are lower densities of one or several hickories (*Carya ovata*, *C. tomentosa*, *C. glabra*, and *C. ovalis*). Other trees include white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), black birch (*Betula lenta*), sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), and red maple (*Acer rubrum*). A subcanopy commonly includes hop hornbeam (*Ostrya americana*), flowering dogwood (*Cornus florida*), shadbush (*Amelanchier arborea*), chestnut (*Castanea dentata*), and witch-hazel (*Hamamelis virginiana*). Low shrubs are common and often diverse: maple-leaved viburnum (*Viburnum acerifolium*), blueberries (*Vaccinium angustifolium* and *V. pallidum*), beaked and American hazelnut (*Corylus cornuta* and *C. americana*), New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus americanus*), and gray dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*) are characteristically present. The herbaceous layer is also richer than in many oak forests. Plants typical of the herbaceous layer include Hepatica (*Hepatica nobilis*), goldenrod (*Solidago bicolor*), tick-trefoil (*Desmodium glutinosum* and *D. paniculatum*), wild sarsaparilla (*Aralia nudicaulis*), rattlesnake weed (*Hieracium venosum*), and false Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum racemosum*), and Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*).

**Associations:** Part of a continuum of dry, acidic communities that contain a variety of tree oak and pine species. More work is needed to define types. Hickory is seldom dominant enough to warrant being part of the name.

**Habitat Values for Associated Fauna:** Wild turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) are found in primarily oak areas. Dry oak forests support a smaller mix of animal species than are found in moister communities. There are no species known to be restricted to the Oak Hickory Forest community. Common species of dry sites include short-tailed shrew (*Blarina brevicauda*), red-backed vole (*Clethrionomys gapperi*), white footed mouse (*Peromyscus leucopus*), and chipmunks (*Tamias striatus*). Snakes of dry forest sites include garter snakes (*Thamnophis s. sirtalis*) and redbelly snakes (*Storeria o. occipitomaculata*). Birds that nest in oak forests include Eastern Wood-Pewee (*Contopus virens*), Red-eyed Vireo (*Vireo olivaceus*), Scarlet Tanager (*Piranga olivacea*), and Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*).

# Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife

## Associated Rare Plants:

|                         |                       |      |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|------|
| ACER NIGRUM             | BLACK MAPLE           | SC   |
| CERASTIUM NUTANS        | NODDING CHICKWEED     | E    |
| ISOTRIA MEDEOLOIDES     | SMALL WHORLED POGONIA | E    |
| LESPEDEZA VIOLACEA      | VIOLET BUSH-CLOVER    | - WL |
| LYGODIUM PALMATUM       | CLIMBING FERN         | SC   |
| RANUNCULUS FASCICULARIS | EARLY BUTTECUP        | - WL |
| SPHENOPHOLIS NITIDA     | SHINING WEDGEGRASS    | T    |

## Associated Rare Animals:

NONE KNOWN

## Examples with Public Access:

Blue Hills Reservation, Milton; Minute Man National Historic Park, Lexington; Stacy Mountain, Gill; East Mountain WMA, Holyoke; Mt. Tekoa WMA, Russell; Mt. Meadow Preserve, Williamstown; Cape Cod Canal, Bourne.

## Threats:

## Management Needs:

## Synonyms

## USNVC/TNC:

Quercus alba- (Quercus rubra, Carya spp.) Forest Alliance -- Quercus (alba, rubra, velutina)/ Cornus florida/ Viburnum acerifolium Forest [CEGL006336].

## MA (old name):

SNE MESIC CENTRAL HARDWOOD FOREST ON ACIDIC TILL.

## ME:

Similar to: Red oak - white oak forest.

## NH:

1997 - Oak-hickory Forests; 1994 - Dry Appalachian Oak - Hickory Forest; AND Dry Appalachian Oak - Hickory Forest, Appalachian Oak / Herb Variant.

## VT:

Similar to: Mesic Transition Hardwood Forest (Oak-Hickory-Northern Hardwood Forest). and Dry oak-hickory-hop-hornbeam forest.

## NY:

Appalachian oak - hickory forest, Coastal oak – hickory forest.

## CT:

Quercus rubra/ Cornus florida forests; AND Carya glabra - Fraxinus americana forests.

## RI:

Oak Hickory forest.

## Weatherbee:

Part of: Dry acidic oak/conifer forest community.

## Author:

P. Swain

## Date:

8/5/99